





NEWS SUMMARY

U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Communications

PICK-UP IN ROOM 1063

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2000

THE NEW YORK TIMES

NOV 17 2000

Can Black Gold Ever Flow Green?

By NEELA BANERJEE

A RCTIC VILLAGE, Alaska
ridged as crocodile skin, the marshy coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge stretches 110 miles from the Canning River in the west to Alaska's border with Canada in the east. Over a few weeks in the early Arctic autumn, the mottled green length of the plain deepens to the color of coffee grounds and rust, a dark vein between the slate Beaufort Sea and the frayed northern edge of the Brooks mountain range.

The fate of this hushed span of tundra, like many other matters, may hang on the outcome of the presidential election. If Gov. George W. Bush of Texas is the new president, this plain and the oil deposits it covers may become an unlikely proving ground for the kind of company BP Amoco is and what it aspires to be: an oil company that is also a protector of the environment.

From its base in London, BP Amoco, the world's third-largest oil company and arguably the most powerful player in Alaskan oil, has broken ranks with most of the petroleum industry and worked to build a reputation as an environmental pioneer, while continuing to promote oil development. Over the last three years, it has acknowledged the danger of global warming and embraced alternative fuels. To foster this image, BP Amoco unveiled a sunburst logo and a new motto: Beyond Petroleum.

So far, BP, which pumps slightly more than 300,000 barrels of oil a day from Alaska, has sidestepped the question of drilling on the coastal plain of the refuge, an emotional environmental issue that gained national attention during the presidential race.

Drilling proponents, including Mr. Bush, the Alaskan congressional delegation and most of the Republican Party, say the country's energy independence hinges on tapping the billions of barrels of oil that geologists suspect are below the plain's permafrost, perhaps enough to pump a million barrels a day for 20 years. For opponents of the drilling, including Vice President Al Gore, the issue is a zero-sum game: if the area is opened to development, a rare wilderness where many birds and animals bear their young would be lost.

Mr. Bush has said unequivocally that he would open the coastal plain to oil exploration and production, though he would need

Congressional support to proceed. Sir John Browne, the BP chief executive, said last week that if the area was unlocked under a Republican administration, BP would be interested in new exploration opportunities there. If it bids on leases to develop fields, which is highly probable given the demands on the company to bolster production and its stock price, BP would have a chance to show what Beyond Petroleum really means.

A green oil company may seem an oxymoron, but some regulators, scientists, environmentalists and investors say they cautiously believe that the company might be trying to transform itself and an industry that has become synonymous with pollution. For the last few years, environmentalists and indigenous groups have met with BP executives and board members to try to persuade them to promise not to drill in the refuge, just as the company pledged a decade ago to stay out of Antarctica. Those who have placed some faith in BP see the Arctic Refuge, home to scarce, unique wildlife, as the crucial test of the company's environmental resolve.

The BP record so far is mixed. The company's other activities in Alaska over the last few years suggest that there is a vast geographical and philosophical gulf within the company. On one side are executives in London who preach environmentalism; on the other are engineers in Anchorage who face the pressure of oil-driven local politics and their own bottom line.

BP executives repeat a company-wide mantra of "no damage" to the environment, and its units have to meet certain environmental goals. "We have learned a lot in 30 years," said F. X. O'Keefe, the head of BP's Alaska Exploration unit. "Our record shows we can go into different areas with little to no impact."

But the company's stock price ultimately depends on how much oil it draws out of the ground and at what cost. To ensure a steady flow of oil as supplies from Alaska's North Slope decline, BP has proceeded with projects and campaigns that pose significant risks to Alaska's ecology.

said many state and federal regulators, wildlife biologists, environmentalists and representatives of native peoples.

"They're trying to present a new BP, but it's business as usual," said Francis A. Grant-Suttie, who, as director of private-sector initiatives at the World Wildlife Fund, meets regularly with BP executives. "On the P.R. level, they have been successful at differentiating themselves from others, but by virtue of what they're doing on the coastal plain, you can see it's sheer rhetoric."

THIS year, the company agreed to a compliance order with the state of Alaska that prohibits it from drilling several months of the year at Northstar, the first offshore well in the North American Arctic. The state contends that BP would not be able to clean up an oil spill in the open waters off Northstar. BP was also placed under criminal probation for five years and paid \$7 million in civil and criminal penalties to the federal government after fumbling a case of dumping by a contractor at another Alaska site, Endicott.

Although BP has said it is not an active party in the heated discussion about development in the refuge, it has donated tens of thousands of dollars to Arctic Power, a group lobbying to open the refuge to drilling, as well as to politicians who support such efforts, including Mr. Bush and the Republican Party.

"Being 'beyond petroleum' isn't an impossibility, but what on the ground says they are?" asked Theodore L. Rockwell Jr., who coordinates the Environmental Protection Agency's

oil and gas program in Alaska.

BP built its reputation on exploration and production, first in Iran more than 60 years ago and later the last generation, in the North Sea and Alaska. Earlier this year, when BP bought the Atlantic Richfield Company, its main rival on the North Slope, it had to sell ARCO's Alaskan fields to Phillips Petroleum in order to receive federal approval for the deal. Phillips produces somewhat more oil, but BP, on a contract basis with other oil concerns, operates most North Slope fields, making it the dominant force in Alaskan oil.

The company's makeover from a staid British energy empire to a brash maverick that embraced environmentalism is the handiwork of Sir John, the chief executive. A career company man who earned his M.B.A. in the United States and worked in Alaska in the late 1960's, Sir John, 52, has given the 154 business units within BP greater independence while demanding impressive results. He also familiarized himself with research on global warming and said three years ago that the company should take a stand on the issue, said David Rice, chief of staff for government and public affairs at BP.

Bucking industry wisdom, BP agreed with the idea that carbon dioxide emissions contribute to global warming and pledged to cut its own emissions by 10 percent by 2010. The company is among the world's largest makers of solar panels and uses solar power at many of its own facilities. It is gradually shifting the emphasis of its exploration and production from crude oil to cleaner-

burning natural gas.

In a letter to employees in July, Sir John wrote that BP's values "may be manifested in different ways, but they have much in com-

mon: a respect for the individual and the diversity of mankind, a responsibility to protect the natural environment."

Shareholders take Sir John's message seriously. At the annual meeting on April 13 percent of shareholders voted for a resolution demanding that BP terminate Northstar and stay out of the refuge, a proportion so high that it stunned company management and even those who introduced the measure.

"Maybe it is painful for BP to have this degree of scrutiny, but being held accountable will help BP improve its environmental performance over the long run," said Simon Billenness, senior analyst at Trillium Asset Management of Boston, one of the sponsors of the resolution.

The notion of drilling in the coastal plain of the refuge provokes intense debate because of what the opposing sides see at stake. Every summer, thousands of birds from as near as Washington State and as far as Antarctica alight upon the narrow strip of tundra to bear their young. About 150,000 caribou, known as the Porcupine herd, migrate almost 500 miles annually from Canada to calve on the treeless expanse.

"There are a lot of people who will never go to the refuge, but I get some peace of mind knowing that there is

an area of naturalness on such a scale," said Fran Mauer, a wildlife biologist with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and an expert on the refuge. "Where else can you have such herds of caribou, so many bears, oxen roaming?"

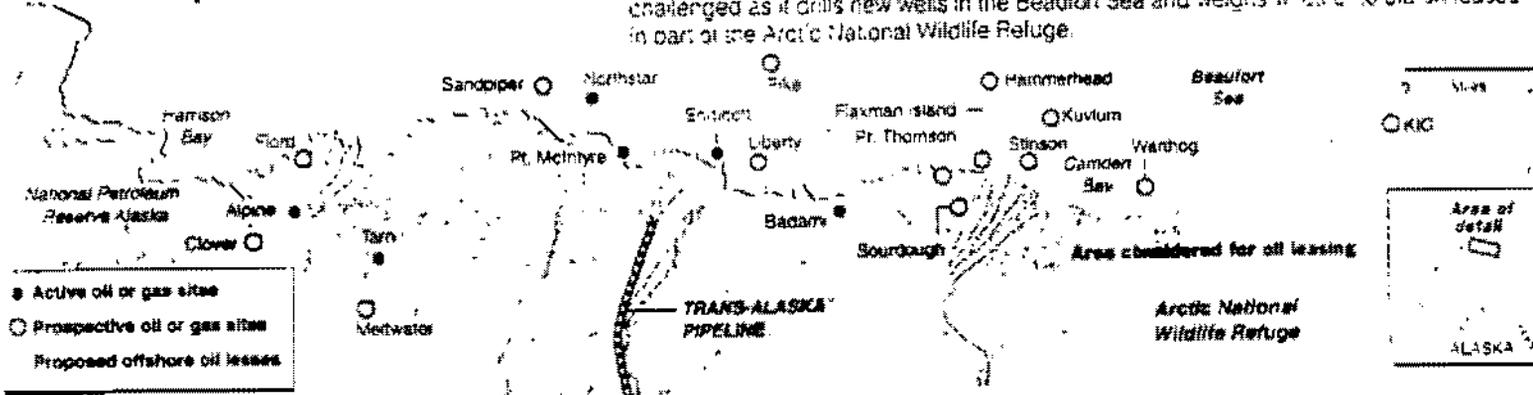
DRILLING proponents say there are about 16 billion barrels in the refuge. But no one knows how much oil is in the coastal plain because very little exploration has been done there. One exploratory well backed by BP and Chevron was drilled years ago on land owned by indigenous peoples within the refuge. BP said the results were a proprietary secret.

Based on seismic data and information gleaned from oil wells near the refuge, the United States Geological Survey has estimated that technologically recoverable oil in the area is about 7.7 billion barrels. If the area pumped one million barrels a day, it could supply oil to the United States for two decades. In comparison, the great Prudhoe Bay field in the North Slope of Alaska, where BP staked its fortune 30 years ago, had about 9.2 billion barrels.

Whatever numbers the experts settle on, Greg Gilbert worries that they will draw oil companies into the

A Reputation Under Threat

BP Amoco's maverick image as an environmental-minded oil company is being challenged as it drills new wells in the Beaufort Sea and weighs whether to bid on leases in part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



coastal plain. A member of the 7,500-member Gwich'in Indian nation that lives scattered through the boreal forests of northwest Canada and north central Alaska, Mr. Gilbert hunts caribou to feed his family of seven. Until about 50 years ago, the Gwich'in followed the Porcupine herd in its trek. Now, they live in settlements of one-story clapboard houses heated by wood stoves and often without running water.

Arctic Village, a settlement outside the southern rim of the refuge, is home to Mr. Gilbert and about 250 other Gwich'in, most of them unemployed, who survive by hunting caribou. Every few hours during one fall day, young men rode down from a nearby ridge in their all-terrain vehicles and unloaded shanks and sides of caribou and moose into their cabins.

Bundled in a fur hat against the biting wind one afternoon, Mr. Gilbert climbed a rickety 10-foot platform on the edge of a forest of stunted birch and pine and took out binoculars to survey for caribou.

"Caribou are sensitive," Mr. Gilbert said. "The oil companies want to

drill in the refuge, but the elders say the caribou will disappear. They will change their route."

He climbed down from the observation platform, and his face was tight with concern. "I think drilling will eventually happen," he said. "The oil companies have the power to do it. But I worry about the future, my kids, their kids."

Opponents of drilling say the refuge could be better protected from development if President Clinton declared the area a national monument. Congress could overturn such a designation, but there is no precedent for doing so.

BP contends that oil development would not harm caribou, pointing to the thriving herd in the North Slope. A range of independent wildlife biologists dispute BP's argument. Moreover, the coastal plain in the refuge is far smaller than the North Slope but has 10 times the caribou population, which would make it very hard for the animals to avoid oil infrastructure.

BP says it can develop oil fields on the coastal plain with what it calls "minimal" environmental impact. The acreage that its newest wells occupy, their "footprint," is much smaller than that of older wells, and pipelines are built higher to let caribou pass underneath. Often, there are no roads nearby, and workers are airlifted in.

Stray caribou roam near the Prudhoe Bay roads that rumble with trucks and pick-ups. Others graze

sometimes under pipelines. One bright morning, near the Phillips Alpine field, a flock of geese lifted like a band from the flat table of the tundra. "The drive is to do no damage to the environment," said Mr. O'Keefe of BP's Alaska Exploration unit, echoing the "no damage" theme heard so often in BP offices from London to Anchorage. "There's no conflict here. The idea runs through all levels of the company."

From the spare halls of BP's Alaska headquarters in Anchorage to the bustling company cafeteria in Deadhorse in the North Slope, green-and-yellow posters spread the new environmental gospel: "Go, Do, Think Beyond." "BP. Bold. Progressive."

BUT doubts about the company's environmental mission run deep. In London, wags say the company is Beyond Belief. In Alaska, it is said that workers on the North Slope, many of whom have weathered the harsh tundra and the industry's bad image for more than 20 years, grumble that BP looks weak for going green.

BP has made sure that its interests are protected. This year, it contributed \$50,000 to Arctic Power, the pro-development lobbying group. A BP executive also serves on the board of the group. BP donates to politicians who vote regularly to open the refuge. Moreover, its donations to the Republican Party this year were \$613,870 out of its total of \$901,796 to political action committees and party organizations, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. The company contributed \$34,421 to Mr. Bush this year, compared with \$4,250 to Mr. Gore.

BP's interest in the refuge reflects its need to keep Alaska output high. At its peak in 1988, the North Slope produced an average of 2.03 million barrels of oil a day. In 1999, daily output fell to about 1.08 million barrels, according to the state Department of Natural Resources.

As the Arctic Refuge issues are worked out, BP is looking for rich new reservoirs in the National Petroleum Reserve to the west of its Prudhoe Bay fields, and offshoots of its older developments. So it embarked on Northstar, a 176-million-barrel field that, in the diminishing reservoir of the North Slope, is considered a large find.

The rig sits on a square, artificial five-acre island in the ocean beyond barrier islands. Endangered bowhead whales migrate near Northstar, and within the barrier islands two types of threatened sea ducks gather by the thousands every summer before migrating south for the winter.

When the field is operating fully, 65,000 barrels of crude oil will pass to shore daily through a pipeline buried below the seabed, an engineering first. BP will start drilling this winter, and it is seeking regulatory approval for another offshore well, Liberty, farther to the east of Northstar and closer to the refuge.

To be able to drill year-round at Northstar, BP must prove to Alaskan officials that it can clean up a spill in the ice-strewn water, should work at Northstar ever go awry.

Since last fall, BP has held three clean-up drills, and each time it has failed. In every attempt, the broken ice in the water wrecked or disabled the equipment designed to collect oil. During a test last month, popcorn thrown on the water as a mock spill floated past the clean-up barges, silent testimony to BP's difficulties.

As a result of the tests, Alaska has placed BP under a compliance order that prohibits the company from drilling at Northstar when the frozen ocean around it has thawed and broken, or from about May to November.

The company, Alaska officials said, claimed in its plan that it could capture oil when up to 70 percent of the sea is covered with ice. But the state resources department contended that BP had difficulty even where there were trace amounts of ice in the water, based on what its monitors had witnessed.

"When you can't clean up oil in the Arctic, should you be going in at all?" asked one federal official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Northstar's pipeline is the first to run under the seabed of the Arctic Ocean. In winter, a process called ice scouring occurs in the Arctic, as ice breaks up, smashes together and plows into the sea floor. BP has installed a thick, single-wall pipeline that the company says is buried deep enough to avoid a puncture. The Joint Pipeline Office, a state and federal committee, tested and approved the pipe.

But other federal officials, environmentalists and an independent

expert on pipelines contended that a double-walled pipe would be significantly safer. The draft version of the environmental impact statement gave the BP pipeline about a one-in-four chance of failure. The final version put the odds at 2 to 5 percent.

Ibrahim Konuk, head of the Canadian research team and a consultant for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on the environmental impact statement for Liberty, cited concerns based on a lengthy computer modeling project conducted by Canada's Geological Survey on ice scouring and pipelines. "There's a very good chance that single pipe will fail," he said.

BP and the Joint Pipeline Office say a double-walled pipe would be more complicated, and therefore harder to monitor and repair. The company said it would stick with a single-walled pipe at Liberty.

BP has excelled in one environmental area: as part of a plea agreement to settle a federal criminal case filed against the company late last year, BP has instituted a nationwide environmental monitoring program at its exploration, drilling and production units to improve oversight and reduce the chance of accidents and spills.

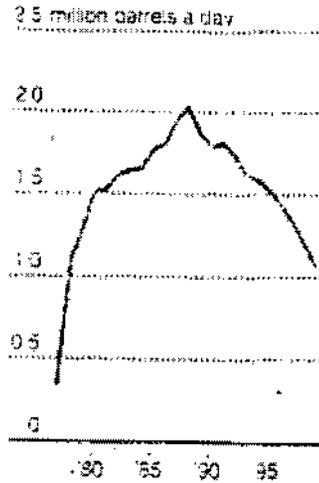
In 1995, a whistleblower from BP's North Slope Endicott field reported that the contractor for which he was working, Doyon Drilling, had been illegally disposing of hazardous wastes from about 1993 to 1995. Last year, the Justice Department filed the criminal suit and a civil suit against BP. The company, which pleaded guilty to one violation of federal environmental laws, was fined \$500,000 in the criminal proceeding and paid \$6.5 million to settle the civil suit.

FEDERAL attorneys in the criminal case against BP contended that the company knew of Doyon's activities but looked the other way — an accusation that BP denied. In the settlement of the criminal case, BP was placed on probation for five years. The company also volunteered over that period to put into place a stringent nationwide environmental management program at a cost of about \$15 million.

While praising the extra step taken by BP, a federal prosecutor recognized the challenge that the company faces. "I think folks at their highest levels are committed to environmental issues," said Deborah Smith, deputy chief of the environmental crimes section at the Justice Department. "But does that reach down to their oil rig operator and change the thinking of an oil rig worker who is from an industry that hasn't always been concerned about the environment?"

Falling Yield

Average total oil production in the North Slope of Alaska since 1977.



Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources

The New York Times



Photograph by Michael Dinnen for The New York Times

Gregory Gilbert, of the Gwich'in Indian nation, hunts for moose to feed his family in northern Alaska.



Photographs by Michael Dineen for The New York Times

A caribou grazed under oil pipelines, above, near an operations center owned by BP Amoco, the dominant oil company in Alaska.

Arctic Reserve Safeguards Urged

By H. JOSEF HEBERT
...c The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - About 250 scientists urged President Clinton to impose safeguards against oil drilling at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and "ensure the conservation of this unique arctic ecosystem."

In a letter to Clinton, the scientists said Wednesday that "five decades of biological studies and scientific research have confirmed" the need to protect the refuge's 1.5-million-acre coastal plain from development.

Clinton has opposed congressional efforts to allow drilling in the refuge in the northeastern corner of Alaska. Many environmentalists have urged him in recent months to make the refuge's coastal strip a protected monument before he leaves the White House, but White House officials have insisted no such action is under discussion.

Vice President Al Gore, the Democratic nominee to succeed Clinton, strongly opposes oil drilling in the refuge. His GOP rival, Gov. George W. Bush, has said opening the refuge to oil development would be a major part of his energy strategy. Bush has argued that drilling can be conducted without harming the refuge's ecosystem or wildlife.

The U.S. Geological Survey has estimated that the refuge's coastal plain may hold about 11 billion barrels of oil, about as much as the Prudhoe Bay field 50 miles to the west, with about 60 percent of that economically recoverable.

Environmentalists argue development of the oil would jeopardize the coastal plain's wildlife, including 130 species of migrating birds; thousands of porcupine caribou that give birth to their young there in summer; and polar bears, musk oxen and grizzly bears.

In Wednesday's letter to Clinton, the scientists said the coastal plain is a 'vital component of the biological diversity of the refuge' and warrants the same protection as other areas of the 19-million-acre refuge already set aside as protected wilderness.

While the scientists said they were not philosophically opposed to oil and gas development in Alaska, they wrote: "Based on our collective experience and understanding of the cumulative effects of oil and gas development on Alaska's North Slope, we do not believe these impacts have been adequately considered" when it comes to the refuge.

The letter-writing effort was organized by the Alaska office of the National Audubon Society and the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society.

Among scientists endorsing the letter were 60 from Alaska and 25 from Canada. The scientists included Edward Wilson, a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning biologist from Harvard; and Paul Ehrlich of Stanford, a leading biologist and author of the 1968 book *The Population Explosion*.

Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, one of Congress' most vocal proponents for drilling in the refuge, said most of the scientists probably had never visited the refuge. Referring to Ehrlich, Murkowski said, "He predicted that oil supplies would be gone by the year 2000."

Murkowski said it's a "myth" to say that oil can't be developed in the refuge without hurting the ecosystem and wildlife, especially with new, less intrusive drilling technology.

Oil has been pumped in Prudhoe Bay for 30 years, said Murkowski, and the caribou have thrived.

"They're not shot at. They're not run down by snowmobiles," he said, and the polar bears "walk the pipeline because it's warm."

On the Net: Arctic Power, pro-development Arctic National Wildlife Reserve lobbying group: <http://www.anwr.org>

Alaska Wilderness League: <http://www.alaskawild.org>

Energy Information Administration: <http://www.eia.doe.gov>

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WASHINGTON, DC, November 1, 2000 (ENS) - The debate over opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil development came to the National Press Club in Washington today, as a top Clinton Administration official and a powerful Republican Senator outlined two very different views of the contentious election year issue.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge supports a vast herd of caribou (All photos courtesy Arctic National Wildlife Refuge)

Jamie Rappaport Clark, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, appeared at a press conference with a host of environmental leaders to urge that the refuge be "permanently protected for future generations."



"When people talk about opening [the refuge] to oil development, they're advocating sticking an oil well right smack in the middle of the wildest place left in America," Clark said. "What will future generations think of us if we hand them an Arctic coastal plain scarred with oil well, roads and pipelines, sucked dry of fuel and also sucked dry of the incredible wildlife that used to be there?"

But at another press conference held just down the hall, Clark's point was sharply refuted by one of the leading proponents of opening the refuge to oil development, Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski.

Murkowski, a Republican, did acknowledge that there are some "legitimate environmental concerns" associated with petroleum development in the region. But the senator had little to say about that subject today, focusing instead on what he termed the "national security" implications of the matter.

"Recent events in the Middle East have given us yet another reminder that we are being held hostage to foreign oil," said Murkowski, referring to the terrorist attack in Yemen that killed 17 sailors aboard the U.S.S. Cole, a Navy destroyer. "It doesn't have to be this way."

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Senator Frank Murkowski (Photo courtesy Office of the Senator)

Murkowski advocates opening up the so-called "coastal plain" of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil development, a position shared by his party's Presidential nominee, Texas Governor George W. Bush.

The 1.5 million acre coastal plain is the only area of the Alaskan North Slope where oil exploration and development is prohibited by law. Murkowski argued that opening the ANWR coastal plain to oil development is necessary to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

Murkowski lashed out at President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, the Democratic candidate for president, for "discouraging" domestic oil production, which the senator said has compromised the nation's foreign policy.

"How can we be an honest broker in the Middle East peace process when we are beholden to Israel's sworn enemy - [Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein - to keep our citizens warm this winter?" said Murkowski. "We need [Iraq's] oil - 600,000 barrels per day."

Polar bears, already impacted by shrinking ice sheets, could suffer if oil drilling is allowed in the Refuge



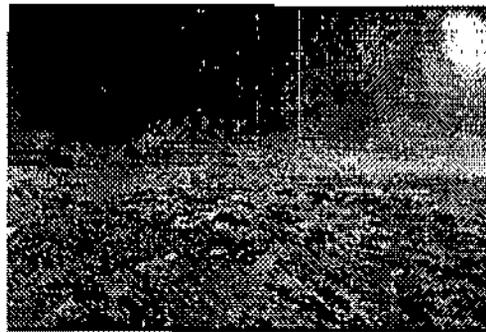
Murkowski maintained that Clinton and Gore are putting American soldiers and sailors at risk in order to prop up their "failed energy policy."

"Remember, the U.S. forces at risk are in place to protect oil we depend on from the Middle East," he said. "Our dependence on Middle East oil illustrates the failure of our energy policy and constitutes a threat to our national security."

Opening up the coastal plain to oil exploration could significantly reduce this dependency, Murkowski said. The Alaska senator said the region could increase domestic production by almost one million barrels per day - nearly twice the amount of oil that the United States imports from Iraq on a daily basis.

"We can reassert American leadership by assuring that our energy policy and our foreign policy are working to achieve common goals," Murkowski said. "We can open ANWR safely. The potential is there."

The Clinton Administration's Clark countered that opening ANWR to oil development would have a "major adverse impact" on the refuge and its wildlife.



The Refuge contains millions of acres of fragile tundra habitat

"There should be no illusions on this point. It would mean that a lot of wells, ports, dormitories, helicopter pads, and so on, will need to be connected by many miles of roads and pipelines criss-crossing the coastal plain in a web of development that will certainly fragment this unique

wildlife habitat," Clark said. "It means competition for limited water between industry and wildlife, it means garbage, pollution, and toxic and oil runoff in the last pristine corner of America's arctic."

Clark's point was echoed by Athan Manuel of the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, a nonpartisan government watchdog organization. Manuel took issue with Murkowski's oft repeated assertion that opening ANWR's coastal plain to oil development would only leave a "small footprint" on the area.

"The track record of the oil industry in Alaska is anything but a small footprint," said Manuel. "It's more like the footprint Godzilla leaves on a small, unassuming town."

Manuel used a large photograph of Alaska's Prudhoe Bay area to make his point. Prudhoe Bay was once a remote wilderness area much like the coastal plain. Since 1968, when North America's largest oil field was discovered at Prudhoe Bay, oil development has transformed the once pristine spot into one of the most heavily industrialized areas in the U.S.

"There's over 1,000 square miles of development there - that's about the size of the state of Rhode Island," said Manuel.

These ground squirrels are among the smaller creatures that inhabit the Refuge.



Prudhoe Bay now sports some 500 miles of roads, 150 drilling pads, 1,400 wells and hundreds of miles of pipelines. The area suffers from a serious air pollution problem. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation says that more than 43,000 tons of nitrogen oxides are spewed into the air each year - almost twice the amount emitted in the Washington, D.C. area.

About 500 oil spills occur in the region each year, involving more than 80,000 gallons of oil, diesel fuel and other materials, Manuel noted. Moreover, about 12,000 acres of wildlife habitat have been destroyed by waste disposal operations in the area, Manuel pointed out.

"This is clearly not a small footprint," he said. "Oil drilling is a dirty, dangerous and polluting industry and it damages the wildlife values that we want to preserve."

The proposal would also do little to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil or lower gasoline prices, said Dan Lashof, a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"The United States cannot produce its way out of oil price spikes," Lashof said. "The United States can and should reduce its dependence on petroleum."



Musk oxen also roam the Refuge

Lashof said that legislative riders drafted by the automobile and oil industries have torpedoed Congressional efforts to raise fuel economy standards that would protect American citizens from fluctuating oil prices.

More than 240 North American scientists sent a letter to President Bill Clinton today, urging that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge be permanently protected from oil exploration.

Distinguished scientists endorsing the letter include Dr. George Schaller of the Wildlife Conservation Society, Dr. E.O. Wilson of Harvard University, Dr. Paul Erhlich of Stanford University, and Professor Emeritus Dr. Michael Soute of the University of California at Santa Cruz.

"Five decades of biological study and scientific research have confirmed that the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge forms a vital component of the biological diversity of the refuge, and merits the same kind of permanent safeguard and precautionary management as the rest of this original unit," the scientists stated in their letter.

One mode of permanent protection for the coastal plain would be for the president to use his executive authority to create a national monument out of the refuge.

Senator Murkowski, asked if he thought Clinton would grant national monument status to the refuge before leaving office, said, "It depends on what kind of legacy he wants to leave."

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NEWS SUMMARY

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The Washington Times

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2000

Senator urges drilling for oil in Alaska

Says U.S. reliance on foreign sources is a bad energy policy

By Tom Carter
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Sen. Frank H. Murkowski accused the Clinton administration yesterday of presiding over eight years of failed energy policy, saying U.S. reliance on foreign oil endangers national security.

Mr. Murkowski, who chairs the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, called for opening of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) for oil exploration as part of the solution.

"Our nation is being held hostage by the Middle East, as supplier of the oil that we've become addicted to," the Alaska Republican told reporters at the National Press Club.

"Remember, U.S. forces at risk are in place to protect oil we depend on from the Middle East. That dependence illustrates the failure of our energy policy and constitutes a threat to our national security."

But just down the hall, a group of environmentalists held a competing news conference to release a letter from some 200 scientists urging President Clinton to give the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge monument status and permanently ban oil exploration in the area.

"They are advocating sticking oil wells smack in the middle of the

wildest place left in America," said Jamie Rappaport Clark, head of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a crown jewel. We need to protect it."

She said that the habitat of caribou, polar bears, musk ox and countless other species would be irreparably damaged if oil companies were allowed to drill in the area along Alaska's north coast.

Dan Lashof, senior scientist at the National Resources Defense Council, said the United States cannot "produce its way out of oil price spikes."

With winter approaching, heating oil prices and gasoline prices are at their highest point in years and U.S. energy policy has become an issue in the presidential campaign.

Republican candidate Texas Gov. George W. Bush, who once worked in the oil business, is in favor of opening the refuge to oil exploration. Democratic candidate Al Gore opposes drilling in the ANWR, and instead proposes tax incentives to make cars, homes and businesses more energy efficient.

Mr. Murkowski reminded the audience that the USS Cole was in the Persian Gulf "patrolling the oil lanes" when it was attacked in Yemen Oct. 12, killing 17 persons.

He also said that forces in the

region are currently at "Threatcon Delta," the highest stage of alert in anticipation of another terrorist attack, all because nearly 60 percent of the oil consumed in the United States comes from foreign sources.

He noted that the United States consumes about 600,000 barrels of Iraqi oil a day.

"How can we be an honest broker in the Middle East when we are beholden to Saddam Hussein for oil," he said.

The area of contention is 1.5 million acres of pristine Alaska coast line above the Arctic Circle.

If Congress were to allow exploration to begin tomorrow, it would take 10 years to come to fruition. Environmentalists say that there is a negligible amount of oil in ANWR, but Mr. Murkowski claimed that drilling there could reduce U.S. dependence on foreign sources by as much as 10 percent.

Like many issues in this election, the polls vary.

The Wilderness Society, which opposes drilling, recently produced a poll showing that 56 percent of Americans want the wildlife refuge untouched.

But the Christian Science Monitor and the Chicago Tribune both conducted polls showing that Americans, fearing higher gas prices, want the refuge opened for drilling by 54 percent and 52 percent respectively.

CORRECTIONS

A photo caption that showed a BP Amoco oil rig in the Oct. 15 Business section incorrectly stated what part of Alaska is off-limits to drilling. Drilling is banned in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but not on Alaska's North Slope.

OCT 16 2000

OCT 15 2000

Would Arctic Oil Answer U.S. Needs?

Alaska's Reserves, Focus of Campaign Debate, Are Still a Mystery

By PETER BEHN
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge plain—1.5 million acres on Alaska's North Slope rolling down to the Arctic Ocean—may be the nation's next great oil find, as Texas Gov. George W. Bush hopes.

Or it may hold scattered oil reservoirs whose production would only marginally help the nation's energy security while shattering the tranquility of an irreplaceable North American wilderness—as Vice President Gore contends.

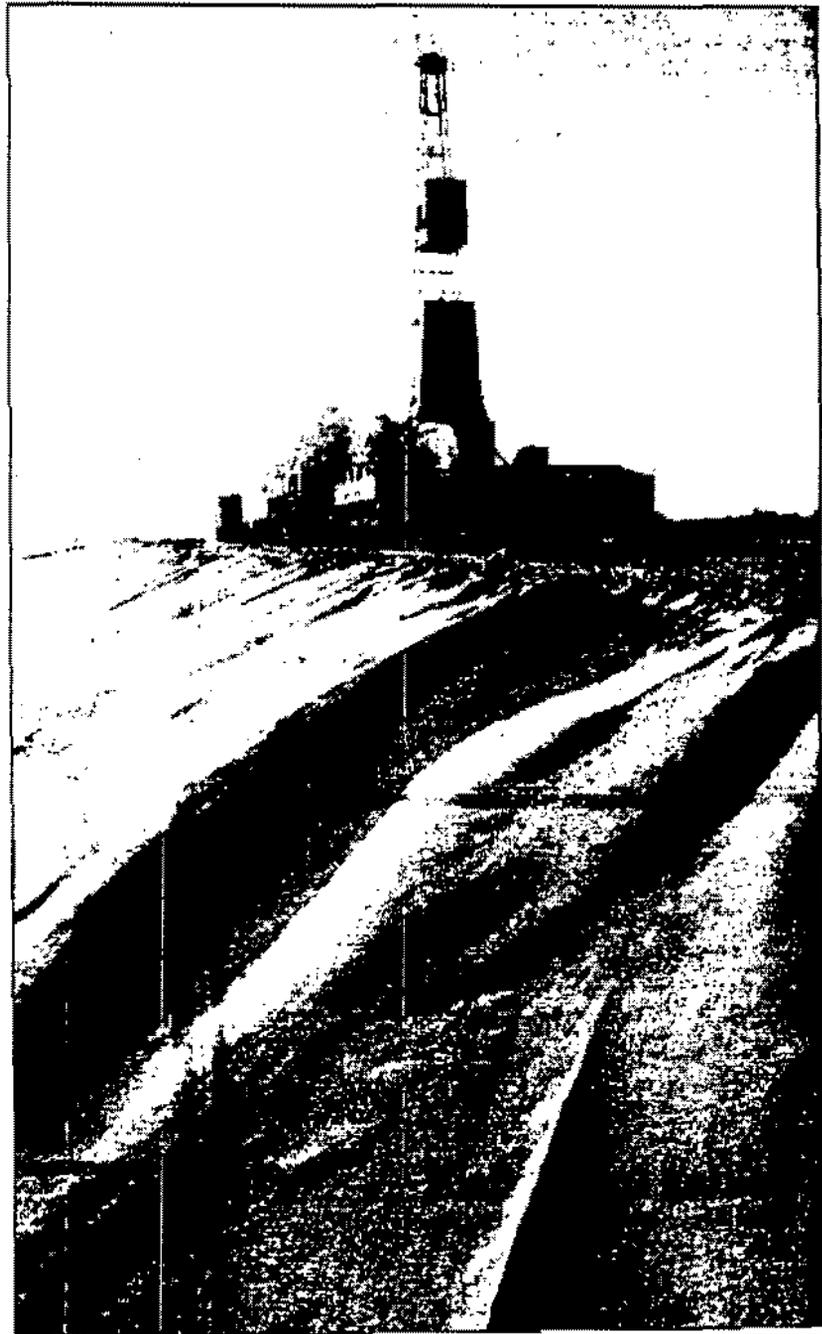
The quandary over oil production and environmental preservation exists elsewhere the nation, from the Rocky Mountain slopes to the coasts of Florida and California. But nowhere is the issue more sharply joined than in the debate over the Arctic wildlife refuge, a fault line in the competing energy policies of presidential candidates Bush and Gore.

At this point, there is no way of telling which view of the Arctic refuge's oil resources is more accurate, according to state and federal oil experts who have probed the geology of the vast refuge plain.

The two sides in the debate over the Arctic refuge disagree about whether the drilling experience next door, on Alaska's Prudhoe Bay, demonstrates that caribou and other wildlife can coexist healthily with oil companies. They also argue over whether technology advances have significantly lessened environmental risks by reducing the "footprint" of activity that petroleum extraction requires in the Arctic.

And fundamentally, the candidates and their opposing supporters don't agree about whether the benefits of taking oil out of the Arctic refuge offset the costs of human intrusion on a wilderness that now offers small groups of backpacking visitors a remote solitude far removed from the 21st century.

If anyone could have a clear sense of what lies under Arctic refuge's tundra, it



FILE PHOTO BY BILL BETH—AP/WIDEWORLD

A BP Amoco facility on Alaska's North Slope, where oil drilling is now off-limits.

would be Ken Boyd.

As director of Alaska's state division of oil and gas, Boyd is one of a handful of people who have seen the closely guarded test results from the only exploratory well ever drilled into refuge plain. He is forbidden by agreement with the companies that drilled the test well—BP Amoco and Chevron—from disclosing the results.

He has spent countless hours staring at seismic maps of underground formations in the refuge, which trace the domes and rifts that may have trapped oil-bearing rocks.

"You pin a couple of these up on the wall. You sit and stare at them, asking, 'What am I looking at? What is this thing?'" he said in a recent interview.

"The conventional wisdom is, yeah, there will be oil," Boyd said, and he believes the quantities will be large. "But how much oil? I don't know. Neither does anyone else," he added.

The very debate over exploring in the Arctic refuge has clouded the issue of how much oil is there.

The test well whose results Boyd has seen, and the seismic maps he has pored over, both date from the mid-1980s, and no further investigations have been made because the refuge is closed to oil companies.

So predictions of how much oil would come out of the Arctic refuge—if oil were found—vary widely based on which side is talking.

The pro-drilling side—led by two Alaskans, Democratic Gov. Tony Knowles and Republican U.S. Sen. Frank H. Murkowski—say the find could be as much as 16 billion barrels, counting both the plain and nearby sites offshore on Native American lands.

That would be the largest field ever discovered, Murkowski said in April, capable of producing 1.2 million barrels of oil a day for at least 20 years.

His source is a 1998 study by the U.S. Geological Survey that reviewed the old seismic records from the mid-1980s.

But the USGS study also concluded that there was only one chance in 20 that the refuge site and adjacent lands hold that much oil.

There was a 50-50 chance of finding 7.7 billion barrels on the refuge itself, and the amount of that oil that companies would actually produce would depend greatly on what happens to world oil prices, the USGS said.

If prices stayed at around \$30 a barrel in today's dollars, the Arctic refuge could yield about 6 billion barrels over the next quarter-century or more. But if long-term oil prices average just \$20 a barrel, also in today's dollars, then only 3.2 billion barrels would be produced, the USGS predicted—a conclusion that the anti-drilling side usually highlights.

Although the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries intends to keep future oil prices within a band of \$22 to \$28 a barrel, no one knows whether OPEC can achieve its own goal. Most energy experts expect prices next year to be at the low end of that range and possibly below \$20 a barrel, assuming Middle East tensions do not trigger significant production cutbacks.

Bush's energy policy statement Sept. 29 said that oil from the Arctic refuge could replace the 800,000 barrels of oil that U.S. energy companies now purchase daily from Iraq, contending that Iraq's growing leverage on world oil markets marked a clear failure of the Clinton administration's energy policies.

The Bush formula could prove true if there is as much as 8 billion barrels of oil under the refuge, another 50-50 chance according to USGS, and if oil prices remain at today's \$30 level and stay there for a decade or more, adjusted upward for inflation, the USGS analysis suggests.

How likely is that?

"They're using very high and improbable numbers," contends Adam Kolton, director of the Arctic campaign for the Alaska Wilderness League, a D.C.-based environmental group opposing drilling in the refuge.

Ken Bird, the USGS official who headed the recent study, said he doesn't know how much oil is under the refuge plain but adds this caveat: "We generally tend to underestimate the potential for undiscovered oil."

Bird says that estimating how much oil might come out of the re-

serve is difficult, given uncertainties about future prices and limited exploration information.

"It becomes very difficult to say," said Floyd Wiesepepe of the federal Energy Information Administration, an author of a review of the USGS Arctic refuge survey.

Oil from the Arctic would do nothing to ease current energy anxieties. Even if Congress and a new Bush administration gave a go-ahead next year, it would be at least eight to 10 years more before significant amounts of oil would start flowing from the refuge, most experts predict.

In a nation—and a world—that is likely to be dependent upon oil and natural gas to power much of its economic activity for decades to come, every discovery will help.

At its peak, the refuge could deliver between 1 million and 1.5 million barrels of oil a day for half a dozen years, if the most optimistic view of its potential proves true. Today, that amount of oil would permit a significant reduction in the approximately 10 million barrels of oil and fuels the United States now imports.

But the United States is part of a world oil market, energy analysts say, and unless the nation faces future embargoes, the real question is how much additional oil the Alaskan refuge would add to world consumption—now running at about 76 million barrels daily. Measured that way, tapping into the Arctic refuge begins to look less important.

Regardless of how much oil is

there, opponents of the drilling in the preserve insist that priority must be given to another depleting resource—wilderness.

Karen Jettmar, who grew up in Adelphi, has lived in Alaska for 27 years, most of it as a backwoods guide based in Anchorage. It's a line of work that has brought her face to face with grizzlies more than once and that has given her a lot of time to think about what wilderness means.

She has stood alone on the refuge plain, overlooking with rolling hills covered with a pastel palette of wildflowers, with the craggy rim of the Brooks Range mountains stretched out behind her. There is no other human within 50 miles. "The landscape is just so big," Jettmar said. "It's just you and what you've brought. It's an amazing, humbling feeling. It's what it must have felt like hundreds of years ago."

With so many other parts of the Alaskan coast cleared for oil discovery, Jettmar and other drilling opponents ask, why can't this one piece be preserved untouched? She doesn't want to share the plain with oil wells: "I say it's all or nothing."

And that is the way some on the other side see it, too.

"I see it as a choice between energy and wilderness, not between energy and healthy wildlife," says BP Amoco spokesman Ronnie Chappel in Anchorage. Oil companies have reduced the impact of oil drilling, he said, but "we can't build facilities that are invisible."

A resource more valuable than oil

By Bathsheba Demuth

OLD CROW, CANADA

FIFTEEN thousand years ago, deep in what is now the wilderness along the Alaskan and Yukon borders, someone - age, sex, language, and beliefs unknown - sat and made a tool. It was fashioned to scrape hides, to flesh the inner surface of a skin before tanning. Its recent discovery in an archaeological dig is the oldest indication of humans in North America, a tool created in a land still embraced by the last Ice Age.

What's remarkable is not just the antiquity and ingenuity of this tool, but its material: The scraper was chipped from the femur of a caribou.

Sometime in the centuries separating the creation of this tool and its 20th-century discovery, the descendants of its maker diversified across northeast Alaska and the Yukon, becoming the people we now know as Gwich'in. Today more than 7,000 Gwich'in make this wilderness their home, and although Gwich'in life has changed, the basic source remains the same. The caribou, as seen in a 15,000-year-old piece of bone, and as seen today, are the basis for survival in the uncertain north.

I have been living in the Gwich'in village of Old Crow over a year now since graduating from high school, a year in which talk of the caribou has been omnipresent - from the frenzy of the fall hunt to the springtime rumors of returning herds. The caribou that sustain the Gwich'in in Old Crow, and across the north, belong to the Porcupine River caribou herd, a mass of nearly 135,000 animals that migrate from their wintering grounds in the Eagle Plains area of the central Yukon to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska. Old Crow lies in the middle of this migration route, in a landscape that seems so vast as to be impervious to the outside world.

However, the hundreds of square miles that make up the traditional Gwich'in lands,

and the migratory paths of the caribou, are more fragile than their ancient grandeur would suggest.

Beneath the coastal plain lies both a blessing and a curse - an untapped deposit of oil and natural gas. These are reserves that, in this petroleum-hungry age, are increasingly in demand. But drilling for this oil would disturb, even destroy, the calving grounds of the caribou.

With threat to the wilderness comes threat to the people who make it home. Development in ANWR stands to eradicate more than the last migratory herd in North America; it also threatens a way of life that transcends 15,000 years of human history.

Destroying the traditional means by which the Gwich'in people survive is cultural genocide - caused not by direct violence, but by the slow disappearance of their primary resource and a gradual assimilation into mainstream society. And while it is unlikely that anyone will starve, it is equally unlikely that the 16 Gwich'in villages across the north could remain Gwich'in, in any cultural sense, without the caribou.

All of this has been said before. The debate over drilling in ANWR is tossed back and forth across the presidential campaign trail. Drilling is denounced by Vice President Al Gore, who stands to protect the refuge, and supported by Gov. George W. Bush, who believes America should be more self-sufficient in its energy needs. Gwich'in representatives tour the country, lobbying for permanent protection of ANWR. The oil companies make their case to every car owner in America.

After my time spent in Gwich'in country, I wish to present a different perspective. Americans should protect the calving grounds of the Porcupine River caribou herd, not because we are environmentally conscious or culturally sympathetic or simply altruistic. We should

protect ANWR, in part, for ourselves.

The 20th century was an age of cultural homogenization: of diversity lost to the overwhelming forces of technological expansion. In the 21st century we are left to contemplate these losses and, if we are aware, to preserve what ecological and human diversity remains. This involves the sacrifice of short-term personal benefits for the long term advantages of a culturally diverse world.

In the changing and uncertain age we now inhabit, a diversity of cultures may be as important to human survival as the diversity of species. I am no believer in a coming apocalypse, but I do understand that our species is living beyond its means, that society, as most Americans know it, is not a sustainable proposition.

The wilderness up north here is not a resource to be explored and exploited, or merely a balm for a hectic lifestyle. It is, in fact, a sustainable and sound way of life. We should never let such a unique existence disappear, even if we will never live this way ourselves, or wish to. Great knowledge can be found here, among the Gwich'in, and great wisdom. Should we let this slip away, for a few months' worth of cheap oil?

IN THE end, it comes down to the fate of the caribou. Preserve the land that sustains the caribou, and the caribou will, in turn, give the Gwich'in a chance to continue their culture. And we will all hold on to a dimension of our own humanity.

But to do so we must relinquish the misconception that, despite the distances between us, we are powerless to influence change. This distance in turn relieves us of no responsibility. Just as the Gwich'in will never meet their ancestors, most Americans will never see the remote village of Old Crow, a place where life grows just as it did 15,000 years ago. It comes with the return of the caribou. For now, and, I hope, for all time.



Anchorage Daily News

Friday, April 14, 2000

Budget drops ANWR Murkowski still pushing oil plan

By DAVID WHITNEY
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - A joint congressional conference committee has erased any mention of drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from a compromise budget bill.

But Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said he is not giving up.

"We are not finished by any means," Murkowski said.

He and other champions of ANWR drilling cheered last week when the Senate approved a budget measure that assumed \$1.2 billion would be raised from a lease sale in 2005. A move to strike the provision was killed on a 51-49 vote, seen as a test of Senate support for drilling.

But the House budget bill contained no such provision. Budget negotiators settled on a compromise late Wednesday that deleted any mention of leasing in the refuge's coastal plain, regarded as a likely place for a major oil discovery.

House negotiators insisted on dropping the drilling provision after they received a letter signed by 18 Republicans.

"The House has never affirmatively authorized drilling in the arctic refuge," they said. "Doing so would represent a major new policy path with serious fiscal and environmental ramifications."

Environmentalists hailed the action.

"While we know that the battle is not over, the 2001 budget sends a clear message to multinational oil corporations and their political allies: Democrats, Republicans and the citizens across the country won't allow them to use the facade of rising oil prices and national security to plunder America's Serengeti," said Adam Kolton of the Alaska Wilderness League.

Murkowski said there are still ways to force the issue. He has already

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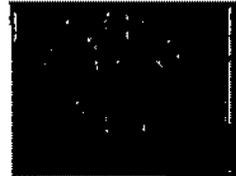
Murkowski said there are still ways to force the issue. He has already introduced one ANWR development bill and plans to include a drilling provision in a larger energy package that will be introduced in coming weeks.

Even under the budget process, Murkowski may not be foreclosed. The budget bill will result in directives to the various congressional committees on how much money they have to spend and raise over the next five years, and Murkowski could press for refuge leasing receipts to cover a portion of the revenue assignment to his energy committee.

q Reporter David Whitney can be reached at dwhitnev@adn.com.

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Anchorage Daily News

Friday, April 7, 2000

Senate vote favors ANWR drilling

By MICHAEL BOLD
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Senate on Thursday refused to ban oil leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

As debate on the \$1.83 trillion budget continued, the Senate voted 51-49 to table an amendment by Sen. William Roth, R-Del. It would have eliminated a budget provision that assumes the government will earn \$1.2 billion from ANWR oil development.

The refuge's 1.5-million-acre coastal plain is regarded as the country's best spot for a major oil discovery, but environmentalists and the Clinton administration say the area is too precious for wildlife and as an arctic ecosystem.

In seeking to remove the ANWR language from the budget resolution, Roth said that the refuge should be protected "for all time and all generations."

But Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, said that allowing drilling "would bring some balance to this nation's energy needs. It can be done with little impact on the land and with great concern for the environment."

Banning drilling, he said, would support the Clinton administration's "failed energy policy that rewards the price fixers of OPEC and the military ambitions of Saddam Hussein. ... This senator is not going to stand by and support increased dependence on Iraq."

Murkowski and fellow Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens, joined by 30 other, mostly Republican senators, have introduced a separate bill that would open the coastal plain of the refuge to drilling. Thursday's vote, though nonbinding, was seen as a litmus test. The vote opens the door for Murkowski to add his drilling measure to a broader budget bill this year, and that would open ANWR to development if signed by President Clinton.

Murkowski and Stevens called the vote a great victory for Alaska. A defeat would have signaled the end of efforts to open the coastal

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plain, Murkowski said.

"Congress specifically set aside the coastal plain in 1980 for future development of the vast oil reserves that it contains," Stevens said. "Today's vote demonstrates there is support for increased domestic oil production."

Roth spokesman Jim Courtney said the Delaware senator will carry on the fight to remove the ANWR language from the budget bill.

Environmental groups blasted the Senate vote.

"Drilling the refuge would be as shortsighted as damming the Grand Canyon for hydroelectric power or tapping Old Faithful for geothermal energy," said Sierra Club legislative director Debbie Sease. She noted that last month Clinton said he would reject "drilling in the protected and treasured natural habitats of Alaska."

Clinton vetoed a budget bill with an ANWR drilling rider in 1995.

Adam Kolton, arctic campaign director at the Alaska Wilderness League, said the close vote and bipartisan support for protecting the refuge signaled that "Democrats, Republicans and citizens across the country will never allow the decimation and destruction drilling would bring to the Arctic refuge."

The Roth amendment had been on the verge of passing until Republican Sens. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and Gordon Smith of Oregon switched their votes at the last minute. Specter said the move was necessary "in light of the rising costs for home heating oil, diesel fuel, gas at the pump and our long-range national defense needs."

But Smith said his vote was driven by the need, as a member of the Budget Committee, to get a budget through Congress and that "I have not reconsidered my position on opening up ANWR at this time."

Earlier, senators voted 66-34 against rolling back federal gasoline taxes. Members of both parties said cutting the gas tax would have little effect on consumers but could cost billions of dollars in federal road money.

Revised summer gasoline price projections from the Energy Department on Thursday indicated skyrocketing fuel prices could be easing. The department said prices should peak this month and then begin dropping to an average of \$1.45 a gallon for summer.

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U.S. Department of the Interior

On the Web

Letter from the Secretary

DRILLING IN THE ARCTIC REFUGE

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

By Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior

Three newly-powerful Republican members of Congress from Alaska are working furiously through the dead of night to carry out a project that would be rejected by the majority of U.S. citizens if they knew about it. The new Congress did not campaign on this issue; it flies in the face of public opinion and a presidential veto; and yet the GOP's leaders are suddenly in a rush to carry out their top environmental priority in both the Senate and the House of Representatives: Hand over the public's last arctic wilderness refuge to exploitation by oil companies.

The coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the last protected fragment of Alaska's Arctic coastline, comprising a pristine, unique ecosystem where hundreds of plant and animal species live wild just beyond the looming shadow of the oil and gas drilling equipment that sprawls across the landscape 100 miles to the west at Prudhoe Bay. Prudhoe Bay is, in many ways, an American success story. It has provided billions of barrels of oil for the American economy. The Clinton Administration strongly supports domestic oil and gas production --in appropriate places-- and in fact hundreds of miles of Alaska's Arctic Ocean shore is open to further exploration.

But the small 110-mile strip of coastline in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is different. The giant Prudhoe Bay industrial complex simply doesn't fit there. Studies have shown that opening this last protected area to oil and gas development would lead to serious threats to the native wildlife, including the Porcupine Caribou Herd, and the native peoples who depend on the herd to live and maintain their traditional lifestyle. Oil and gas development would disrupt these pristine lands by covering them with an industrial spider web of pipelines, utility corridors, barracks and equipment sheds, roads and other facilities. Each stage of development would bring physical disturbances of the area, risks of oil spills and pollution, and long-term damage that would impair wildlife for decades or centuries. And, in return for losing this last sanctuary of Arctic wildlife, the American people will receive...what?

That's not very clear. To be sure, it's been made deliberately unclear and swathed in hyperbole. Alaska's congressional delegation, which has been leading the charge, promises billions upon billions of dollars in unspecified benefits for every man, woman and child in the nation. At least that's the word from the Alaska Hypeline. But the reality is much closer to the tundra. And as the facts are nailed down, their

promised billions begin to melt away like spring snow.

Republican leaders of the Congressional budget committees have told their colleagues that drilling in the Refuge will bring in an estimated \$1.3 billion in revenue. That, presumably, will allow any Congressman, when eventually faced by angry electorate asking Why did you sell our birthright? to brandish the King's X of Deficit reduction -- I did it for deficit reduction.

Of course, \$1.3 billion represents only 0.3 of 1 percent of the budget deficit. But even that estimate is wildly exaggerated. For one thing, it assumes that oil prices will be more than \$30 a barrel in the year 2000. What are the chances of that? Right now the price of West Texas intermediate crude is \$19 a barrel, with no real increase in sight. Middle East producers can be depended on to keep their price just low enough to make it more profitable for us to import their oil than to develop alternative energy sources of our own. Their reserves are estimated at 80-100 years, so they're not going to be pushing the price up in five years. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, one of the first places we found oil in the world, is a hot prospect to increase production. Venezuela, too, is increasing production.

No, it doesn't appear that prices will topping \$30 in the foreseeable future. In fact, the U.S. Energy Department's Energy Information Agency predicts oil prices will be only \$19.13 by the year 2000, not \$38. That brings the estimate of revenue from the Arctic Refuge down to under a billion dollars. On top of that, new geological analysis shows there's probably less oil under the Arctic Refuge than what the Republicans are counting on to make their numbers work. Taken together, these factors could bring the total revenue down to a little more than half what the Alaska congressional delegation is promising.

Then there's the question of the state's cut. The state has already sued the federal government, saying it's entitled to 90 percent of the lease revenue; now they say they re willing to settle for only half. No doubt. But in Alaska itself, one of the Senate sponsors of drilling has told the press not to worry, that once the bill is safely passed the state can sue and get its 90 percent share. That means 49 states and 250 million citizens of America receive a \$70 million in deficit reduction, while Alaska deposits almost 10 times as much, \$630 million, in its own treasury.

A reasonable person might question the state's need for this new oil windfall. Alaska remains one of the few states without a state income tax. This year alone, it will give back to its citizens a total of \$536 million -- 1/3 of the total amount that proponents claim will be generated by drilling in the Refuge. The state recently announced that for 1995 each Alaskan will receive a state check for \$990.30 from the state. This is the highest one-year dividend paid from the Alaska Permanent Fund since the state began sharing its oil wealth with its citizens in 1982. No other state has such a program. Frankly, not even the oil companies need to drill in the Refuge. If they'll turn around and look west instead of east, they'll find they can drill undisturbed for 1,000 miles --all the way to Siberia. There are plenty of places to drill for oil without damaging America's Serengeti.

In addition to offering bogus financial benefits to the country, the Republican sponsors also warn that America might someday need oil from the Refuge to guard against another oil embargo. But even they don't really buy that. If they did, the Republicans wouldn't be eliminating energy conservation programs in the Department of Energy that would save more oil than we could ever pump out of the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

Three things are clear: (1) the American people who own the Refuge don't stand to get much out of this deal; (2) the political leaders of Alaska and industrial leaders who financed their campaigns would reap the biggest, most disproportionate windfall in recent history; and (3) if they are prevented from working in the dark of night, kept from using Washington's Byzantine budget process to conceal their self-serving manipulations -- if they're forced to come out in the daylight and explain themselves -- it just won't

happen because Americans won't stand for it.

No wonder they're in such a hurry.

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U.S. Department of the Interior

On the Web

Letter from the Secretary

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: As Close as Your Own Backyard

By Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior

Most Americans will never visit the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. But wildlife from the refuge probably visits your state every year.

The caribou, wolves and other animals we associate with America's largest wildlife refuge are only half the story of its rich diversity. More than fifty species of birds who make the refuge their home are welcome guests in our hometowns in the Lower 48th during migration and the winter season.

It is the delicate natural balance supporting these birds and dozens of other animals which is threatened by parts of the oil and gas industries and the Congressmen who do their bidding. Opening the refuge to oil and gas development doesn't just affect a small spot of land above the Arctic Circle. It impacts the birds we see in our backyards, and the fierce pride we have as a nation that values protection of wildlife and natural beauty.

I was lucky enough to spend time in the Arctic refuge shortly after becoming Secretary of the Interior in 1993. The tundra, a thousand shades of emerald and jade, sparkled in the soft light of the midnight sun. On a field of cotton flowers and saxifrage, musk oxen circled to protect their calves as a pack of wolves stalked nearby. It was late summer and the caribou had already trekked southward into the passes of the Brooks Range; the tundra was touched with the scarlet hues of autumn, and the snow geese would soon be coming down from Wrangell Island to fatten up before the long flight southward.

A total of 135 species of birds have been recorded on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge. Each year these birds use the coastal plain to nest, raise young, feed or rest for their migration to destinations across the United States and beyond.

Snow geese will eat cotton grass on the Coastal Plain for up to 16 hours a day, increasing their body fat by 400 percent in only two or three weeks. They leave and fly nonstop more than 1,200 miles before resting again. They descend like thick white clouds on the central valley of California. Thousands of people come to the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge on cool, sunny mornings to see them return from feeding in nearby rice fields.

Tundra swans on the Refuge's coastal plain are part of the eastern continental population. They winter on the east coast of the United States. Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Reserve in North Carolina has more than 30,000 swans each winter and attracts more than 50,000 visitors.

The golden plover and the lapland longspurs from the Arctic Refuge migrate to the northeastern United States. The red-throated loons and oldsquaw go to the Midwest, the ruddy turnstone and gray checked thrush to the Southeast. The long-billed dowitcher and savannah sparrow head for the South and the short-eared owl and golden eagle roost in the northern Rockies.

The presence of these winged visitors adds a grace note to our lives. We wait their arrival, marking our calendars by the sound of their flight. They are part of what makes our towns and regions special, these visitors from the north. The migration of wild creatures is an ancient constant in our uncertain modernity.

Oil and gas companies, through their Congressional supporters, are pushing for the chance to upset these ancient constants. They want to invade the last small piece of Arctic sanctuary for an oil supply that would satisfy only a few months of our national demand. More than 85 percent of the great arctic coastal plain is already open to oil exploration and development, but they want more.

An impact study looked at the snow goose and found aircraft disturbance would displace the geese from critical feeding habitats. Disturbance impacts weren't measured for the other birds I've mentioned here, but you can be sure the massive disruption being proposed by the oil companies would have an effect.

Should Congress vote to end the long-standing protection of the heart of one of our premier refuges, it will inevitably shatter the balance of land and life into a thousand fragments.

Development will not only be the death knell for the refuge. It will also cast a pall over the dozens of towns and areas nation wide that celebrate, like clockwork, the yearly return of the arctic birds.

If big oil has its way, I wouldn't be confident in setting my watch by the snow goose anymore.

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NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 8, 2000

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/501-4633

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR BRUCE BABBITT ON NEW LEGISLATION BY SENATOR FRANK MURKOWSKI TO PERMIT OIL EXPLORATION IN THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

"I strongly oppose legislation introduced in the Senate today to open the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling.

President Clinton has shown great leadership by announcing his intention to veto past Congressional attempts to circumvent the wishes of millions of Americans nationwide who oppose the degradation of their national treasure. These Americans and the Clinton/Gore Administration have made it clear again and again: we will protect this last undeveloped fragment of America's arctic coastline for the thousands of caribou, polar bears, swans, snow geese, musk oxen and countless other species who use it to birth and shelter their young.

There is a time and a place for oil exploration in Alaska, and we have permitted environmentally sensitive oil exploration in a large area of the National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska, an area set aside for that purpose. There is a big difference between the designation of a National Petroleum Reserve and a National Wildlife Refuge but some in Congress consistently fail to recognize this fact. So today I am recommending that President Clinton oppose any further Republican Congressional attempts to use legislation to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling."

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NEWS SUMMARY

U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Communications

PICK-UP IN ROOM 1063

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1999

Anchorage Daily News

Babbitt, lawmakers urge ban on ANWR oil projects

By DAVID WHITNEY
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt joined lawmakers in calling for permanent closure of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development.

"The issue is whether we can preserve one part of Alaska's coastal plain as inviolate," Babbitt said at a press conference organized by Minnesota Rep. Bruce Vento to announce introduction of a bill designating the refuge's coastal plain as wilderness.

The refuge's 1.5 million acre coastal plain is the most coveted unexplored oil ground on Alaska's North Slope. By some estimates, it may be the richest oil prospect remaining in North America. But critics contend development would despoil prime habitat for waterfowl, caribou, polar bears and other Arctic wildlife.

"This is one of our crown jewels, and one we shouldn't lose," Vento said.

Introduction of legislation to open the refuge to drilling or to preserve it as wilderness has been a perennial exercise in Congress since 1980, when the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act was enacted. That law required that the area be studied for possible development, but an act of Congress is required for exploration and development.

The Congress, backed by President Reagan, came closest to enacting a development bill in the late 1980s. But the effort collapsed with the March 24, 1989, grounding of the Exxon Valdez. The tanker was carrying North Slope crude. It spilled at least 11 million gallons of oil, instantly becoming the symbol of unfulfilled promises by the Alaska oil industry to protect the environment.

Flanking Babbitt, Vento and six other Republican and Democratic congressmen at Tuesday's press conference were posters showing the damage in Prince William Sound 10 years ago and the use of the Arctic refuge's coastal plain by some 160,000 caribou.

"The terrible impact of that (Exxon Valdez) disaster is still being felt," declared Rep. David Bonior, D-Mich. "We cannot allow that to happen again. By protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, we will be saving the last stretch of the Alaska coastline that's not open to oil development."

Alaska lawmakers said oil is now moved from the North Slope to Lower 48 states much more safely.

A spokesman for Alaska Rep. Don Young, the Republican chairman of the House Resources Committee, distributed material asserting that only a small part of the huge refuge would be explored or developed. Sen. Frank Murkowski, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said Alaskans are "entitled to the development of our resources."

Despite all of the fanfare, there is virtually no chance of Congress either turning the coast plain into wilderness or opening it to development. Since the oil spill, the two sides have been locked in a standoff unlikely to be tested again until a new president is elected. President Clinton has vowed to veto any development bill, and the Republican-controlled Congress has the votes to block a wilderness bill.

* Daily News reporter David Whitney can be reached at dwhitnev@adn.com

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A Time To Drill, And A Time To Preserve Creation

By Bruce Babbitt

Even before Ecclesiastes, mankind has known there is a time and a season and a place for every purpose under heaven: "A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to rend, and a time to sew."

As stewards of God's creation, these values guide us as we keep and manage the public land. The question is never simply what we want from nature's bounty, but what the ecology of the landscape can support, what the living wild needs from us. That's why, for instance, we encourage fishing, on many wildlife refuges, forests, and national parks, why we prohibit it on others, and why we restrict it to "catch-and-release only" on still others.

Such values are manifest in our approach to oil drilling in Alaska. Blanket policy shouldn't be made from behind a desk in Washington or from a board room on Wall Street. Before making a tough, perhaps irreversible, call, decision makers need to get out on the landscape, talk to the local people who would most be affected, and visit the complex watersheds whose ecologies are at stake.

As Secretary of the Interior, I have tried to do just that. In 1993 I visited the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, which runs east from Prudhoe Bay clear to the Canadian border. This past July I spent a week traveling west from Prudhoe Bay along the Arctic shore toward the Bering Sea and Siberia. It is this region where Congress has authorized oil exploration as part of a legislative compromise that established the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

What I saw is a complex, harsh environment, yet one in which the natural and human forces have evolved in a fragile balance with one another. I spent a day with a Nuiqsat family, the Ittas, at their summer subsistence camp on the Miguakiak River near the arctic coast, as they butchered and stored three caribou and took me out on the frigid waters to haul in nets of whitefish. Working long hours through the short summer, they must store up enough food to sustain them through the dark winter months when the caribou have gone over the mountains to inland areas. I left understanding their concern about development that could disrupt their livelihood. And I assured them that this Administration will protect their way of life.

Despite these complexities, the Alaska Congressional delegation has a simplistic vision of the Arctic slope: The more drilling the better, anywhere and everywhere, even in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. To that end, one member, Congressman Don Young, chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, has declared his intention to throw open that refuge and rename it the "Arctic Oil Reserve."

The Clinton Administration strongly disagrees. The Arctic Wildlife Refuge -- the last protected fragment of the great coastal plain where North America slopes down to the polar ocean -- should be preserved inviolate for generations to come.

When I visited the Refuge it was late summer. The tundra, a thousand shades of emerald and jade, sparkled in the soft light of the midnight sun. On a field of cotton flowers and saxifrage, musk oxen

circled to protect their calves as a pack of wolves stalked nearby; upstream we saw a grizzling moving through the willows. The tundra was already touched with the scarlet hues of autumn, and the snow geese were winging down from Wrangell Island to fatten up before the long flight southward.

One night at Peters Lake, I read the words of Barry Lopez: "Twilight lingers -- the ice floes, the caribou, the musk oxen, all drift -- the stillness, the pure light -- you can feel the silence stretching all the way to Asia."

There is no room for drilling here. That would be like offering Yellowstone National Park for geothermal drilling, or calling for bids to construct hydropower dams in the Grand Canyon. There is simply no time or place or season for oil and gas development within its borders, now or ever.

Well then, what about the Petroleum Reserve west of Prudhoe Bay where Congress has authorized oil exploration? Last year, Governor Knowles requested the Interior Department to consider an exploration and leasing program. In response to the Governor's request, the Bureau of Land Management is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will provide the basis for a response to the Governor's request before the end of 1998.

There are several important issues already emerging from the EIS process. Perhaps most important is protecting the subsistence lifestyle of the Eskimo groups whose very culture and existence is tied to the migrating caribou herds, the waterfowl habitat, and the fishery resources of the rivers that criss-cross the tundra plains. Will roads and pipelines and the wave of development that follows oil doom this culture to disappear just as the buffalo culture of the Great Plains vanished in the last century? We cannot allow that to happen.

Yet there are two sides to the Alaska resource equation. In July I visited the new oil fields under development on the margins of Prudhoe Bay. There the companies showed me tiny drilling pads built by helicopter and by using temporary winter "ice roads" that vanish with the spring thaw. Using new technologies the oil pipeline that accesses the Alpine discovery will cross beneath the Colville River, preserving that important wildlife corridor from any surface disruption. It is a very different scene from the old developments at Prudhoe. While it is definitely not for a wildlife refuge, it may be compatible with the subsistence and wildlife values of at least some areas of the Petroleum Reserve lands.

In sum it may well be that with proper safeguards and the most advanced technology we can meet what I believe was the desire of Congress that we stay out of the Arctic Wildlife Refuge forever and instead look west from Prudhoe Bay. As we prepare the environmental impact statement, we will be seeking ways to reconcile oil exploration and development with environmental protection of the coastal plain, its wildlife, and its native cultures.



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 7, 1998

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416

BABBITT SIGNS DECISION FOR ALASKA PETROLEUM RESERVE THAT BALANCES PROTECTION FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT WITH OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt announced today that he has signed the Record of Decision (ROD) for the 4.6 million acre Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) Final Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The ROD adopts the Bureau of Land Management's preferred alternative for management of the 4.6 million acre area.

The decision, based on extensive scientific evaluation of the area, makes available to oil and gas leasing approximately 87 percent of the northeast quadrant of NPR-A. Approximately 580,000 acres will not be made available for oil and gas leasing. This area encompasses nearly all of the key goose molting habitat and critical caribou habitat. In addition, 900,000 acres is made available for oil and gas leasing, but prohibits all surface activity, or allows only exploratory drilling and essential road and/or pipeline crossings. Special stipulations protect subsistence and provide protection for the resource values found in the planning area.

"This is a balanced plan that carefully weighs the impacts on a fragile Arctic landscape and its abundant wildlife with the long-term economic future of Alaskans," Babbitt said. "A great deal of hard work went into the planning process and I believe with this decision the Department has complied with the law and the intent of Congress when it authorized leasing in the National Petroleum Reserve in 1981."

"I have instructed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to begin the next step in the process," he continued. "The BLM will develop a schedule to implement the complex components of the decision, including a schedule for conducting an oil and gas lease sale."

The decision will direct the BLM to exclude from oil and gas leasing nearly all of the area of shallow lakes north and east of Teshekpuk Lake. This area is heavily used by geese during molting season. It also includes important calving and insect relief areas for caribou. Similarly, the decision prohibits permanent oil and gas surface occupancy on Teshekpuk Lake and other locations important for fish and subsistence use. Altogether nearly one-third of the study area will bar surface development of oil and gas.

If you would like to order a copy of the decision, you may request one from the BLM Alaska State Office at (907)271-5960.

-DOI-



NEWS SUMMARY

U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Communications

PICK-UP IN ROOM 1063

THE WASHINGTON POST

AUG - 7 1989

Babbitt Presents Plan To Allow Oil Drilling in Alaska Reserve

By JOBY WARRICK
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Clinton administration unveiled yesterday a plan to allow oil leases in the wild and untapped National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, but said it would ban drilling in some of the most oil-rich areas to preserve critical nesting grounds for wildlife.

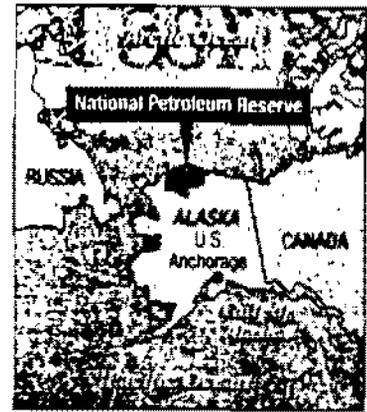
The long-anticipated announcement—which was quickly criticized by both environmentalists and oil industry officials—opens the door for the first commercial oil and gas fields in the 23-million-acre reserve, a vast and unspoiled expanse of Arctic tundra that was set aside by Congress 22 years ago as a

hedge against future energy crises.

With an eye on dwindling oil supplies in the vast Prudhoe Bay fields to the east, petroleum companies and Alaskan politicians have been pressing the administration for years to open the reserve for exploration and drilling.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, in announcing the decision on leasing, said his plan would help meet the country's future energy demands while ensuring the survival of caribou herds and waterfowl that migrate by the millions to the region's Teshekpuk Lake.

"This is one of the unique biological resources in the world," Babbitt said of the lake, which will be protected as part of a 600,000-acre "drill-



BY BRUCE WYLLIE—THE WASHINGTON POST

free" zone. "It is an absolutely extraordinary landscape."

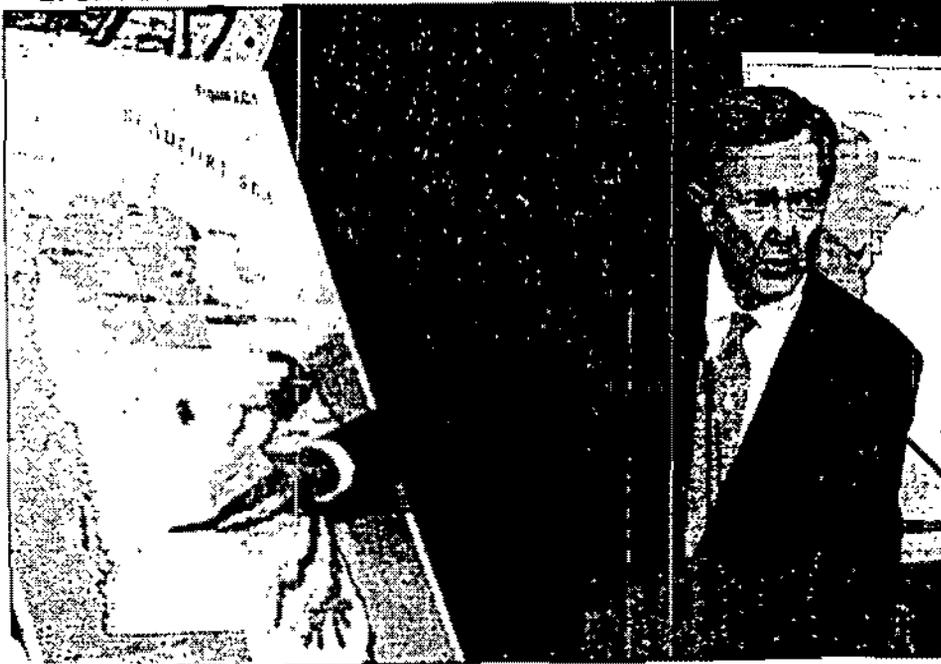
But the plan's restrictions failed to placate drilling opponents, some of whom have lobbied to keep the entire reserve off-limits to oil exploration.

Bill Meadows, president of The Wilderness Society, called the decision "terribly shortsighted" and a "victory for politics over science, wildlife and future generations."

The Alaska Wilderness League's Adam Kolton said the administration had declared "Christmas in August for big oil." He added: "The last thing we should do is raid a national reserve at a time of record-low oil prices and abundant supply."

At the same time, some oil company officials complained that the restrictions in Babbitt's plan would put about one third of the reserve's most coveted lands out of reach, though

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt announces his decision to allow oil leases in Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve.



some said partial drilling is better than none at all. "[It] boils down to looking at the glass half-full or half-empty," said the Independent Petroleum Association of America in a statement.

Alaska's Rep. Don Young (R), a proponent of oil leasing, reserved judgment until he could study the plan. But he said "environmentally sound" development was needed to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. "The worst time to do this is during a time of crisis—when the public is weary of high oil prices," Young said.

The plan announced by Babbitt covers only the northeastern quarter of the petroleum reserve, a 4.6-million-acre parcel that borders the central Arctic oil fields to the east.

Like the rest of the reserve, it had

been set aside by the Harding administration as strategic oil holdings for the U.S. Navy. Congress transferred the land to the Interior Department in 1976, and five years later passed a law allowing competitive bidding for oil and gas leases. A few leases were granted soon afterward, but no commercial fields were ever developed.

Interest in the reserve surged again in the mid-1990s because of technological improvements and amid growing fears in Alaska that the 12-billion-barrel oil fields at Prudhoe Bay were nearing exhaustion. At the request of Alaska Gov. Tony Knowles (D), the Clinton administration began a study to determine how it should manage possible oil field development in the reserve.

The resulting plan, developed over 18 months, bans drilling outright in

about 13 percent of the 4.6-million-acre tract, an area that covers the summer range of the 25,000-head Teshekpuk caribou herd as well as critical nesting areas for loons, geese and other migrating fowl around Teshekpuk Lake.

Also under full or partial restrictions are a number of deep-water lakes and the entire floodplain of the Colville River, home to hawks and other raptors.

Babbitt urged Congress to reinforce the no drilling limits with legislation, and he criticized recent efforts to expand oil drilling into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—a federal protected wilderness that Babbitt said "should remain off-limits."

"There should be some places on this planet," he said, "where we do not take risks."

U.S. Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416

August 4, 1998

**SECRETARY BABBITT TO ANNOUNCE FINAL DECISION ON DEVELOPMENT
OF NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE IN ALASKA**

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt will brief media on Thursday, August 6, at 1:00 p.m. EDT on the final decision for exploration and development of oil and gas resources in the northeast quadrant of the 23 million acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A).

The decision will be in the form of a "preferred alternative" selected through a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement process involving several Interior agencies under the direction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The inter-agency group, with representatives from the State of Alaska and the North Slope Borough, spent 18 months conducting and reviewing scientific evaluations and outreach to stakeholders. The area studied encompasses approximately 4.6 million acres, including environmentally sensitive wildlife habitat around the Colville River and Teshekpuk Lake.

"The study process was able to point us toward a balance, based on good science and broad consultation, for this part of the NPR-A," Secretary Babbitt said. "Whenever a balance is struck, there are going to be those who will be displeased. However, in this case, I believe we have found a good foundation that protects important and sensitive environmental resources and subsistence hunting and fishing rights while recognizing the intent of Congress in designating this area a Petroleum Reserve."

The Secretary will brief media in Room 7000 of the Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC. A telephonic connection to the press conference for Alaska media only can be arranged by special request. For the "listen only" connection number, please contact Stephanie Hanna at 202/208-6416 or Anne Jeffery at 907/271-4418 after noon on Wednesday, August 5.

An optional technical briefing will be held immediately following Secretary Babbitt's announcement. The technical briefing, to be conducted by Tom Allen, Alaska state director for BLM.-DOI-

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U.S. Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 17, 1998

**STATEMENT BY SECRETARY BABBITT ON USGS ASSESSMENT OF
OIL RESERVES UNDER ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

The resource update compiled by the U.S. Geological Survey should provide a cold shower of reality for those who continue to seek a justification for oil drilling within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This assessment makes the probability that other Prudhoe Bays exist under the coastal plain - the biological heart of the Refuge - vanishingly small.

The USGS data assessment indicates that any oil under the Arctic Refuge coastal plain is more likely held in a multitude of small reservoirs. The implication is clear: to recover this oil would require the kind of infrastructure that would forever and drastically alter the landscape of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, now dedicated to the conservation of Alaska's magnificent wildlife and wilderness resources.

The Administration's commitment to protect and preserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has not and will not change. At the present time, the Department of the Interior is cooperating with the State of Alaska and other stakeholders on an environmental impact statement looking at a portion of the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska to explore whether oil and gas leasing could be compatible with the subsistence needs of Alaska Natives and the needs of wildlife. But let me be very clear. There are places on the Arctic Coastal Plain that should be forever set aside to sustain and protect the abundance of wildlife. The coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge must remain that place.

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U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, USA



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary

For immediate release
June 19, 1997

Contact: Mary Helen Thompson
(202) 208-6416

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
ON SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN
UNITED STATES V. ALASKA

I am pleased by the Supreme Court's decision today in United States v. Alaska. The Court's decision reflects the purpose of creating the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to include the lagoons and other tidally-influenced waters, which are inextricably linked to the refuge's delicate ecosystem. The importance of the coastal waters will be underscored in the coming weeks as the porcupine caribou herd migrates to the lagoons to escape the swarm of summer insects. Under this decision, the integrity of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has been preserved for this and future generations.



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 15, 1997

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416
Dan Sakura (O) 202/208-4678

INTERIOR SECRETARY TO SIGN WILDLIFE PROTECTION AGREEMENT FOR LAND ACQUISITION IN ALASKA THRU EXXON FUNDS

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt will sign an agreement on Monday, May 19, that will allocate \$15.2 million from the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Settlement fund to acquire prime coastal lands and fjords for Kenai Fjords National Park and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

About 32,000 acres will be purchased through this agreement with English Bay Corporation, a Native Alaskan corporation. These lands will protect fish and wildlife species that were directly affected by oil after the spill, including marbled murrelet, pink salmon and sea otters.

"This is an extraordinary agreement that protects valuable habitat for Kenai Fjords National Park as well as archaeological and cultural sites important to Alaska Natives who were directly affected by the oil spill," Secretary Babbitt said. "At the same time, English Bay Corporation will be able to use these funds to create a brighter future for EBC shareholders and the residents of the Village of Nanwalek and without harming these spectacular and valuable lands."

The agreement with English Bay Corporation will be signed at 11:00 a.m. in the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, on the Sixth Floor (6100 corridor, above C Street Entrance) of the Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC.

Media is welcome to attend Monday's signing. Representatives from the *Exxon Valdez* Trustee Council and others will be available to provide an advance briefing in 6100 corridor conference room for media at 10:30 a.m. about the English Bay acquisition and other *Exxon Valdez* Settlement Fund restoration activities.

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NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 1997

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416
Dan Sakura (O) 202/208-4678

SECRETARY BABBITT SIGNS AGREEMENT TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR ALASKA NATIVES AND TO PROTECT THE KENAI RIVER

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt today announced the successful implementation of bipartisan legislation to benefit the Kenai Natives Association, Inc., an Alaska Native urban corporation, and to protect the Kenai River through the use of settlement funds from the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

Upon signing an agreement with the Kenai Natives Association (KNA) to implement the legislation, Secretary Babbitt said, "This agreement will both protect fish and wildlife habitat on the Kenai River and provide Alaska Natives with significant new opportunities for economic development on the Kenai Peninsula."

"This is a great day for Alaska Natives, wildlife, the Kenai River and the Bureau of Land Management. I commend Chairman Don Young and Congressman George Miller for their successful work to pass this important bipartisan legislation," he continued.

As part of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, Congress passed the 'Kenai Natives Association Equity Act Amendments of 1996,' which authorized the KNA land exchange. KNA is an Alaska Native urban corporation based in Kenai, Alaska, established in accordance with the Alaska Natives Claim Settlement Act of 1971.

In addition to resolving a long-standing land management issue involving the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, the legislation authorizes the creation of the Lake Totatonten Special Management Area to protect fish and wildlife habitat and subsistence activities on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In accordance with the legislation, Secretary Babbitt today directed the BLM to begin planning to establish the 37,000 acre Special Management Area, immediately adjacent to the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, in the interior of Alaska, northwest of Fairbanks.

In 1980, Congress established the 1.4 million acre Kanuti Refuge to conserve fish and wildlife populations and to provide habitat for white-fronted geese, other waterfowl, migratory birds, moose, caribou and other species.

(more)

According to Diana Zirul, President of KNA, "the legislation will allow KNA greater flexibility to use our lands and will provide additional lands, including the Fish and Wildlife Service headquarters site in old-town Kenai, important subsurface interests, and the necessary funding to promote the economic development of KNA's resources, while still respecting and preserving our heritage."

The agreement was reached in full partnership with the State of Alaska, with the support of Governor Tony Knowles. "Protecting the Kenai River is important to all Alaskans," Knowles said. "This is one of a series of gains to protect the Kenai River. A partnership of federal, state and local governments, along with the Kenai Natives Association, sport fishing groups, commercial fishing groups, businesses and private landowners has come together and, by putting the river first, we all benefit."

The agreement marks the conclusion of almost twenty years of discussions and negotiations between KNA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the federal agency responsible for managing the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. President Franklin D. Roosevelt set aside 1.7 million acres of land on the Kenai Peninsula to establish the Kenai National Moose Range in 1941. In 1980, Congress expanded the Moose Range to nearly 2 million acres and renamed it the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

In Alaska, the BLM manages 89 million acres of federal public land, including the White Mountains National Recreation Area and the Steese National Conservation Area, as well as 952 river miles protected under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Congress passed bi-partisan legislation in 1992 directing Secretary of the Interior to enter into expedited negotiations with KNA to reach an agreement to provide for the exchange or acquisition of lands. Negotiations conducted in accordance with the 1992 legislation led to the agreement that was codified in the 1996 legislation.

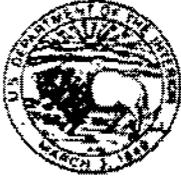
Under the terms of the 1996 legislation:

- o The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would acquire 3,254 acres of land on the Kenai River and the Moose River, for inclusion in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, for \$4.4 million. As part of the EVOS small parcel habitat protection process, the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council has agreed to provide \$4.0 million from the civil settlement fund. The three federal trustee agencies provided the balance of funding from the federal restitution fund.
- o The land acquisition package includes the Stephanka Tract, an 803 acre tract which was ranked among the highest value small parcels for the benefit of species injured by the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill. To protect the important archeological and cultural values of the Stephanka Tract, the legislation directs the Interior Department to nominate the tract to the National Register of Historic Places.

- o To provide KNA with additional opportunities for economic development, Congress authorized the federal government to convey to KNA a five acre refuge headquarters site from the FWS in old town Kenai as well as important subsurface rights, with the exception of coal, oil and gas rights, beneath KNA's retained lands. The legislation also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to amend the Kenai Refuge boundary to exclude privately-owned KNA lands from the Refuge and to lift development restrictions, which were imposed by the Alaska Natives Claims Settlement Act, from KNA's lands. KNA will retain a significant land base of approximately 20,000 acres following the implementation of the agreement.

- o To compensate for the removal of restrictions on the private land currently in the refuge, Secretary Babbitt today directed the BLM to begin the initial planning for the new Lake Totonten Special Management area and to establish an eleven-member committee. The committee will include individuals from the villages of Alatna, Allakaket, Hughes and Tanana, as well as representatives from the Doyon Corporation, the Tanana Chiefs Conference and the State of Alaska.

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NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 25, 1996

Stephanie Hanna (O) 202/208-6416

**STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR BRUCE BABBITT ON
INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO NAME BROOKS RANGE WILDERNESS
IN ARCTIC REFUGE AFTER MOLLIE BEATTIE**

"I am deeply grateful to Congressman Don Young for his leadership in introducing legislation in the House of Representatives to name one of the most awe-inspiring wilderness areas in the United States after Mollie Beattie.

"This wilderness spans the heights of the majestic Brooks Range, towering over the seasonal pageant of migrating wildlife along the Arctic coastal plain in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I think it most appropriately symbolizes Mollie's spirit: wilder, more powerful and more free from the influence of man than anywhere else in America. Alaska is a place that enchanted Mollie in her duties as Director of the Fish & Wildlife Service, and it is a place where she longed to return.

"As Congressman Young and Alaska Senators Murkowski and Stevens know, Alaska is perhaps the most spectacular and beautiful place on earth. I appreciate their willingness to share this place forever with Mollie's spirit, and it is my fervent hope that this legislation passes on a fast track and that President Clinton can sign it into law immediately."

-DOI-

Note: Mollie H. Beattie served as Director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service from September 10, 1993, until Secretary Babbitt reluctantly accepted her decision to leave the Department of the Interior on June 5. She had previously returned to the Service after medical leave following two serious operations for brain cancer in 1995. She was the first woman Director of the Fish & Wildlife Service, and fought for protection of endangered species and strengthening the stewardship of the National Wildlife Refuge System. She and her husband, Rick Schwolsky, are residents of Vermont.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 1, 1995

Mike Gaudin (O) 202/208-6416

LANDMARK CONSERVATION ACT MARKS 15th ANNIVERSARY DECEMBER 2

Statement by Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt

Alaska--its lands and its people--are cherished by all Americans, those who have been fortunate enough to visit and countless millions who dearly want to, to whom it would be the vacation of a lifetime.

Record numbers of visitors came to Alaska's national parks, wildlife refuges and public lands this year, boosting not only the state's economy but giving hundreds of thousands of people a greater appreciation of the American land conservation ethic. This week, all Americans should join Alaskans in celebrating a very special anniversary.

The vast majority of the Alaska units managed by the Department of the Interior were established 15 years ago, on December 2, 1980, as part of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which former President Jimmy Carter has called "one of my proudest accomplishments as President." The act established 10 new National Park Service units, nine wildlife refuges managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and large conservation and recreation units under the Bureau of Land Management.

These units were established primarily as places where we preserved our common heritage both to show our grandchildren and to sustain the ecosystems on which we ultimately depend.

These lands are part of the great mosaic of Alaska, the only state big enough to provide not only for a range of development activities within federal, state, Native and private lands, but also to protect unimpaired public values and resources found nowhere else.

This legislation was controversial in Alaska when it became law, but 15 years later it is evident that the law works --these nationally important lands are providing a new economic base for Alaskans and at the same time preserving some of finest country in America.

Visitation to the increasingly well-known National Park Service areas has skyrocketed since 1980. The final numbers are not in for 1995, but parks expect to see

more than 1.6 million recreational visits in Alaska, triple the number in 1981. Denali continues to be the most visited area, with about 490,000 visits, followed by Klondike Gold Rush (400,000), Glacier Bay (250,000) and Kenai Fjords (210,000).

The 16 national wildlife refuges in Alaska attract some three-quarters of a million visitors annually, while areas managed by the Bureau of Land Management are used by about 300,000 recreational visitors each year. For instance, since 1980, the one-million acre White Mountains National Recreation Area northeast of Fairbanks has been transformed into a popular winter playground. The BLM has built nine public recreation cabins and connected them with a 200-mile long system of winter trails popular with snowmachiners, dog mushers and skiers.

Interior agencies, in an ANILCA-arranged association with state agencies, have built the Alaska Public Lands Information Centers in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Tok into efficient, one-stop centers used by more than 200,000 people each year.

Tourism numbers also have translated into sustainable business opportunities for many Alaskans. More than 400 businesses are licensed to operate on refuges, parks and other public lands. The companies range from sole proprietor hunting and fishing guides to multi-national cruiseship operators, and employ thousands of people in full-time and seasonal jobs.

Conservation units in Alaska --especially in the north and west --protect major breeding grounds for vast populations of ducks, geese and other waterfowl. Hundreds of thousands of caribou breed on and migrate across public lands in northern, Interior and southwest Alaska. Lands set aside in 1980 also host thriving populations of grizzly bears, bald eagles, wolves and peregrine falcons --species whose populations have been seriously reduced in the Lower 48.

In addition to world-class sport fishing opportunities on public lands, Alaska's \$2 billion commercial fishing industry also relies on federal lands, as much of the salmon harvest off the state's shores begins its life in the protected waters of national parks, wildlife refuges and other public lands.

The 1980 Act also embraced the fact that people are very much a part of the Alaska landscape. Subsistence hunting and fishing is prospering and a crucial component of rural economies, giving rural Alaskans the opportunity to continue providing game and fish to their families and to perpetuate significant cultural and spiritual traditions. The artifacts of people, from the earliest North Americans to the turn-of-the-century gold seekers, are also protected across Alaska.

According to former President Carter, ANILCA and other major Alaska legislation "not only protected America's heritage, but also provided special consideration for extractive resource development, concessions for commercial use of vast areas of the North Slope, and left available for development 95 percent of Alaska's most promising

oil-bearing fields.

"Thanks to this hard-won, balanced approach," said Mr. Carter, "these historic pieces of legislation received broad, bi-partisan support."

In the 15 years since the passage of ANILCA, the American people have come to agree that the law has been well-implemented and the important, long-term values of the land have been protected.

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